Australian Bureau of Statistics

6227.0 - Education and Work, Australia, May 2006

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 13/12/2006

MEDIA RELEASE

December 13, 2006 Embargoed 11.30am (AEDT) 118/2006

Just over 1 in 5 Australians have a Bachelor degree or higher

The number of Australians with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification continues to increase, according to results released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

In 2006, 21% of Australians aged 15 to 64 years had a Bachelor degree or higher qualification, compared with 13% in 1996. The proportion with other non-school (see media note) qualifications increased from 29% to 31% over the same period.

Overall, the proportion of 15 to 64 year-olds with a non-school qualification was 52%, slightly higher than in May 2005 and an increase of just over 10% since May 1996.

The main fields of study were management and commerce, with 17% of males and 19% of females enrolled in these courses in May 2006.

More males held a non-school qualification than females. Postgraduate degree holders were predominately male, and males accounted for almost 70% of Certificates III and IV qualifications - a group which includes the traditional trade qualifications.

Just over a quarter (26%) of the population aged 15 to 64 (including those still at school) reported Year 10 or below as their highest level of education, and 20% reported Year 12. Slightly over 15% had a Certificate III or IV as their highest educational attainment.

Of the 2,279,100 people studying for a qualification in May 2006, 38% were studying for a Bachelor degree (or higher) and 14% were studying for a Certificate III or IV. The highest proportion (45%) of Bachelor degree students were aged between 20 and 24 years, but 27% were between 15 to 19 years.

Over 160,000 mature age (45 to 64 years) students were enrolled in a non-school course of study in May 2006.

Further details are available in **Education and Work, Australia, May 2006** (cat. no. 6227.0).

Media Note: Non-school qualification refers to educational attainments other than school education, specifically postgraduate degree, graduate diploma, graduate certificate, Bachelor degree, advanced diploma, diploma, and all certificate levels.

This page last updated 17 December 2007

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